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# Department of Defense **INSTRUCTION**

August 30, 1995  
**NUMBER 1308.3**

ASD (FMP)

**SUBJECT:** DoD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs Procedures

References: (a) DoD Directive 1308.1, "DoD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs,"  
July 20, 1995  
(b) DoD 8910.1-M, "DoD Procedures for Management of Information  
Requirements," November 1986, authorized by DoD Directive 8910.1,  
June 11, 1993

## **A. PURPOSE**

This Instruction implements policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures under reference (a) to govern physical fitness and body fat standards in the Armed Forces.

## **B. APPLICABILITY**

This Instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments (including the Coast Guard when it is operating as a Military Service in the Navy), the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Combatant Commands. The term "Military Services," as used herein, refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

## **C. DEFINITIONS**

Terms used in this Instruction are defined in enclosure 1.

## **D. POLICY**

It is DoD policy that individual Service members possess the cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and whole body flexibility to successfully perform in accordance with a Military Service-specific mission and military specialty. A Service member whose percent of body fat exceeds the Military Service-established body fat standard shall be considered overfat. Cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength, balance, agility, and explosive power, together with desirable body composition, form the basis of the DoD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Program.

## **E. RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall ensure that:

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a. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy shall monitor the DoD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Program in the Department of Defense and coordinate the health promotion program.

b. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs shall establish a health promotion program for the Military Services to use in conjunction with their Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs. The health promotion program shall, at a minimum:

(1) Stress the benefits of appropriate physical activity and nutrition in maintaining and/or enhancing health, performance, and safety.

(2) Make use of unit and/or installation newspapers, the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, and other media to provide health promotion and fitness education to the service members.

(3) Monitor the medical aspects of the Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs.

(4) Provide appropriate medical information and advice related to the Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs.

(5) Assist in the coordination of the Military Services' medical research on physical fitness and body composition.

(6) Reinforce the drug and alcohol abuse, and tobacco cessation programs.

2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall establish a Physical Fitness and Body Fat Program for use with the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (OASD(HA))-established health promotion program, consistent with this Instruction and shall ensure that an established health promotion program exists with their physical fitness program.

a. The Military Services shall place primary emphasis on the fielding and monitoring of programs that develop and maintain general health and physical fitness. The Military Services shall also place emphasis on the evaluation and testing, or assessment, of personnel against a prescribed standard of performance.

b. Each Military Service shall establish specific requirements and conduct the physical fitness training for its particular needs and mission.

c. The Military Services' physical fitness programs are fundamental portions of the general health and lifestyle enhancement programs.

d. The Military Services health promotion programs for physical fitness shall complement the health program of the OASD(HA).

e. The Military Services shall use and financially support sports programs and recreation facilities as resources for physical fitness programs to increase motivation.

f. The Military Services may encourage all civilian employees in the Department of Defense to participate in physical fitness programs. The Military Services may use the same media channels as they use for the military members to inform and educate civilian employees in the Department of Defense.

## F. PROCEDURES

### 1. Physical Fitness and Health

a. Objectives. The Military Services shall design physical fitness training and activities to maintain a level of physical fitness that promotes combat readiness, enhances cohesion in units, promotes a competitive spirit, develops positive and informed attitudes toward exercise and nutrition, and promotes self-confidence and self-discipline. To achieve those ends, the Military Service must carefully plan and supervise the physical fitness programs, follow the established principles of physical training, and involve the participation of all personnel. This does not minimize the individual Military Service member's responsibility to maintain an acceptable level of physical fitness.

b. Program Design. The Military Services shall design and implement physical fitness programs tailored to suit the particular needs and mission of each Military Service, consistent with the established principles of physical conditioning.

(1) The personal involvement, example, and support of commanders at all levels are essential to the success of the physical fitness program. All commissioned and noncommissioned officers shall support the health promotion programs and maintain a high standard of physical fitness.

(2) Military Service members, including members of the Reserve components, should exercise on a regular basis (three to four times each week) and to an intensity that provides a training effect. Reserve components' physical fitness and body fat standards shall be the same as those for the active component members' standards of each Military Service.

(3) The Military Services shall incorporate job-specific physical standards into their respective physical fitness programs.

(4) The commanders may approve exceptions when the environment is operationally constraining.

(5) Military Services shall incorporate a health promotion program that combines the physical fitness program with the "wellness" concept in accordance with DoD 8910.1-M (reference (b)).

(6) Military Service members may be authorized to use duty time for physical fitness training. The recommended duration is approximately 1 1/2 hours, three times weekly. Some physically demanding jobs (i.e., infantry and special operations, etc.) may require additional training time.

(7) Medical examination programs shall include a system to determine those personnel at risk for cardiovascular disease. Personnel at increased risk shall be placed on an exercise program only after consultation with medical authorities.

(8) Military Service policies and programs shall assist in motivating Military Service members toward the achievement of high standards. The Military Services shall, at a minimum:

(a) Recognize personnel who attain outstanding levels of physical fitness and/or make substantial improvement.

(b) Develop programs that are challenging and have sufficient variety to maintain interest in the programs.

c. Evaluation

(1) The Military Services shall develop and utilize physical fitness tests (PFTs) that evaluate cardiovascular and muscular endurance.

(2) All Service members regardless of age shall be tested. Testing standards may be adjusted for age and there shall be physiological differences between men and women.

(3) All Service members shall be formally evaluated and tested for the record at least annually. Corrective action for failure to meet required standards must be initiated.

(4) Physical fitness testing shall be conducted in a manner that prevents scores from being inappropriately changed and ensures compliance with established rules and procedures.

(5) Efficiency or fitness reports shall include comments on physical fitness if the Service member fails to meet the standard.

(6) Military Services shall forward PFT scores to the gaining command when the Service member is transferred.

(7) The Military Services shall incorporate a health promotion program that combines the physical fitness program with the "wellness" concept and, if progress is not made in three months, the Service member shall be referred to medical authorities for evaluation. The Military Services shall view actual weight loss as less important than reduction in body fat and, if progress is not made in three months, the Service member shall be referred to medical authorities for evaluation.

## 2. Body Fat Control Policies and Procedures

a. Body Fat. The determining factor in deciding whether a Service member is overfat is the Service member's percent of body composition, as estimated by the circumferential standard method. The Military Services shall use the height-weight screening table (enclosure 2) and overall appearance as the first-line screening techniques. Service members who exceed the height-weight screening table (enclosure 2) or whose appearance suggests an excess of body fat will have their body composition determined using the circumferential-based method. More stringent height-weight tables than provided at enclosure 2 are authorized. Body composition varies by age, selected general health factors, genetics, and status of training.

(1) The Military Services are authorized to set more stringent weight for height standards based on health fitness or appearance criteria to meet the Military Services' needs or mission requirements, provided these standards are based on published data or valid published data that supports the Military Service's needs or mission. The DoD minimum allowable goal for males is 18 percent and maximum is 26 percent the minimum allowable for females is 26 percent and maximum is 36 percent. Whatever new requirements that the Military Services establish, there must be a 8 to 10 percent difference between the male and female standards. Military Services shall not derive, extrapolate, or adjust female body fat standards using data from male subjects or vice versa. When setting more stringent body fat standards, Military Services must make provisions for the 3 to 4 percent standard prediction error inherent in any circumference method formula.

(2) The standards for one gender shall not be extrapolated from the other gender's standard or be derived from the data base of the other gender.

### (3) Procedures

(a) The Military Services shall determine percent body fat by a circumferentially measurement technique. To standardize to the greatest degree possible, the Military Services shall use similar validated circumferential equations for the prediction of body composition: males--neck and waist or abdomen; females--neck, waist or abdomen (optional), wrist and/or forearm (optional), and hips. Percent of body fat measurements shall be applied and recorded when:

1 A Military Service member exceeds the weight parameters of the height-weight screening table at enclosure 2.

2 The Military Service member's immediate commander determines that the Service member's appearance suggests an excess body fat.

(b) The Military Service member determined to be overfat shall receive dietary information or counseling as part of a body fat reduction program. Once enrolled if progress is not made in three months, the Service member shall be referred to medical authorities for evaluation. The Military Services shall view actual weight loss as less important than reduction in body fat.

(c) The Military Services shall conduct remedial training for those who fall either below the prescribed standards of physical fitness or above the designated level of body fat. Failure to show progress in meeting Services standards, when there are no medically limiting circumstances, shall be cause for comment on efficiency or fitness reports. "Progress" is defined as either "approximately 3 to 8 pounds of weight loss monthly" or "one percent reduction in body composition each month." Continued failure over a reasonable period of time shall result in consideration for administrative separation under Service regulations.

(d) The Military Services shall provide an annual report assessing their physical fitness and health promotion programs to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness in letter or memorandum format. Those reports shall contain the following, as a minimum:

1 Narrative descriptions of the current physical fitness program, the body fat reduction control program, and health promotion program.


2 The strengths of the programs (physical fitness, body fat reduction, and health promotion).

#### G. INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

The reports in this Instruction are exempt from licensing in accordance with DoD 8910.1-M (reference (b)).

#### H. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Instruction is effective immediately.



Edwin Dorn

Enclosures - 2

1. Definitions
2. Height-Weight Screening Table



## DEFINITIONS

1. Aerobic Fitness and/or Cardio-Respiratory Endurance. The functional capability of the heart, lungs, and blood vessels to distribute oxygen and energy substances to the working muscles, combined with the capability of the working muscles to extract those delivered substances efficiently for energy production over sustained periods of time. Essentially, it is the body's capability to receive and utilize oxygen, carbohydrates, and fats to produce energy.
2. Anaerobic Exercises. Exercises that require a maximum burst of effort or energy, are of a stop-start nature, and require a high level of intensity for short bursts of time. Examples of anaerobic exercise are "weight lifting" and "sprinting."
3. Body Fat. The body is composed of fat, fat-free mass (which includes muscle, bone, and essential organ tissue), and body water. "Body fat" is expressed as "a percentage of total body weight."
4. Flexibility. The functional capacity of a joint to move through a normal range of motion. Flexibility is highly specific and dependent on the muscles and connective tissue surrounding a joint. Good flexibility is characterized by freedom of movement that contributes to ease and economy of muscular effort.
5. Muscular Endurance. The ability of a skeletal muscle or group of muscles to perform repeated contractions for an extended period of time. It is measured as the number of submaximum contractions performed or submaximum holding time.
6. Overfat. A Service member whose body fat exceeds the Military Service prescribed standard.
7. Overweight. A Service member whose body weight exceeds the maximum limit indicated in the height to weight screening table, unless his or her estimated percent of body fat falls below the Military Service-prescribed standard.
8. Strength. The maximum force that can be exerted in a single voluntary contraction of a skeletal muscle or skeletal muscle group.
9. Training Effect. The physiological response to exercises, when conducted with sufficient regularity, intensity, and duration. Improved efficiency of the cardio-respiratory system (aerobic fitness) and/or muscular strength and endurance. Exercise conducted a minimum of three times weekly (preferably on alternate days) that raises the Service member's heart rate to 60 to 90 percent of maximum for his or her age, for 20 to 30 minutes that produces a training effect.



TABLE

CRITICAL WEIGHT VALUES FROM 1983 METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE  
120% OF MIDPOINT OF MEDIUM FRAME VALUE <sup>1</sup>

HEIGHT (inches)	WOMEN WT (lbs)	MEN WT (lbs)
58	139	-
59	141	-
60	144	-
61	147	161
62	151	164
63	155	167
64	160	170
65	164	174
66	168	178
67	172	181
68	176	185
69	179	188
70	183	192
71	187	196
72	-	200
73	-	205
74	-	210
75	-	215

<sup>1</sup> Values listed are for height without shoes and weight without clothes.